

Message Text

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10

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 OMB-01 AID-05 IGA-02 /069 W

----- 056846

R 170950Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4832

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 1278

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ASEAN

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER SECURITY ASSISTANCE
TO ASEAN

1. NEW ZEALAND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND OVERSEAS TRADE B.E. TALBOYS, ARRIVED
IN SINGAPORE MARCH 16 FOR THREE DAY- OFFICIAL VISIT.
STRAITS TIMES OF MARCH 17 COVERED ARRIVAL PRESS
CONFERENCE WITH FRONT-PAGE STORY HEADLINED "NEW ZEALNAD
OFFERS MILITARY TRAINING EQUIPMENT TO ASEAN". STORY SAID
NEW ZEALAND WAS PREPARED TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND MILITARY
EQUIPMENT TO ARMY UNITS OF ASEAN COUNTRIES AND THAT
NEW ZEALAND IS WILLING TO KEEP ITS 1,000 TROOPS STATIONED
HERE UNDER THE FIVE POWER DEFENSE AGREEMENT (FPDA) IF
THE GOS DECIDES.

2. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED FROM NZ DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER,
HOWEVER, THAT TALBOYS MADE NO PREPARED STATEMENT AT PRESS
CONFERENCE AND THAT HIS REPORTED REMARKS WERE MADE ONLY
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IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS. THEREFORE, DAWSON FELT

STRAITS TIMES ARTICLE CONVEYED THE MISLEADING IMPRESSION THAT GNZ WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE FORTHCOMING ON THESE SUBJECTS THAN TALBOY'S REMARKS TO PRESS REALLY WARRANTED. DAWSON SAID TALBOYS MERELY STATED IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION THAT GNZ IS WILLING TO CONSIDER PROPOSALS THAT NEW ZEALAND PROVIDE MILITARY TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT TO THE ASEAN COUNTRIES. ON THE QUESTION OF THE NEW ZEALAND FORCE IN SINGAPORE, TALBOYS SAID HE IS HERE TO GET THE VIEWS OF THE GOS IN DECIDING WHETHER THE TROOPS SHOULD STAY ON. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESENT NZ GOVERNMENT IS NOT BOUND BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW THE TROOPS WITHIN 18 MONTHS.

3. DAWSON SUBSEQUENTLY SENT EMBASSY A "TRANSCRIPT" OF TALBOYS' REMARKS AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE BASED ON NOTES TAKEN DOWN HASTILY BY A HIGH COMMISSION OFFICER ON QUESTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ASEAN. THE TRANSCRIPT INCLUDED ONLY THE FOLLOWING Q AND A. QUOTE: QUESTION: IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT THE NEW ZELAND FORCE WILL BE WITHDRAWING IN ABOUT 18 MONTHS' TIME. WOULD NEW ZEALAND BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER TRAINING ASEAN PERSONNEL IN NEW ZEALAND? ANSWER: I WOULD BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS THIS. I WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSING THE PRESENCE OF NEW ZEALAND FORCE WITH MINISTERS. UNQUOTE. QUOTATION IN THIS "TRANSCRIPT" IS CONSIDERABLY DIFFERENT FROM FOLLOWING DIRECT QUOTE IN STRAITS TIMES: QUOTE IF ASEAN IS INTERESTED, NEW ZEALAND IS PREPARED TO HELP OUT WITH MILITARY TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT. UNQUOTE.

4. TALBOYS WAS APPARENTLY CONCERNED OVER POSSIBLE IMPACT OF STRAITS TIMES ARTICLE. AT CONCLUSION OF ADDRESS TO SINGAPORE PRESS CLUB ON MARCH 17, TALBOYS WAS ASKED TO ELABORATE ON NZ OFFER TO PROVIDE MILITARY TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT TO ASEAN. TALBOYS STATED HE WAS MISQUOTED IN PRESS POSSIBLY DUE TO CONFUSION CAUSED OVER HIS RESPONSE TO TWO QUESTIONS AT ONCE. THE MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT, HE SAID, WAS TO EXPLORE THE FEELINGS OF SINGAPORE AND ASEAN GOVERNMENTS ON PRESENCE OF NEW ZEALAND TROOPS. RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE MADE UPON HIS RETURN TO NZ. NZ WILL NOT BE SUPPLYING OR EQUIPPING ANY ASEAN FORCES -- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IT HAS ENOUGH TROUBLE EQUIPPING ITS OWN.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Draft Date: 17 MAR 1976
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Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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